

• HERGE •

THE ADVENTURES OF  
**TINTIN**  
**LAND**  
**OF**  
**BLACK GOLD**

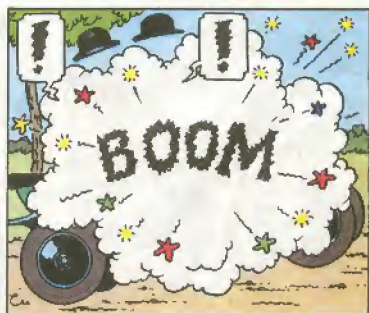
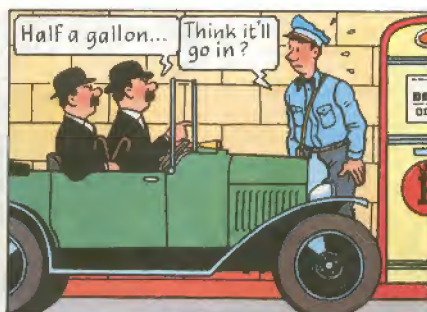
الذهب الأسود



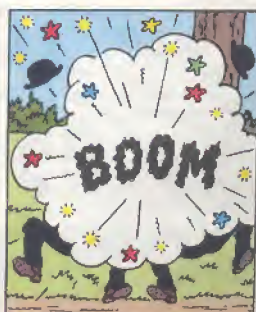
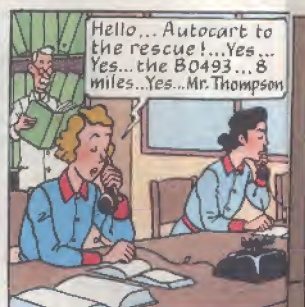
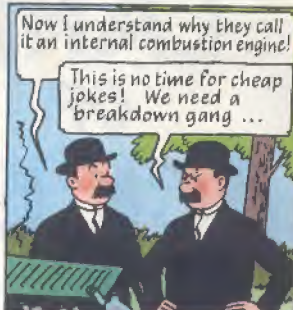
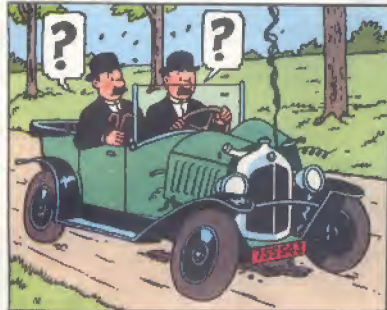
MAGNET

# LAND OF BLACK GOLD

الدَّهَبُ الاسْوَد







Next morning ...

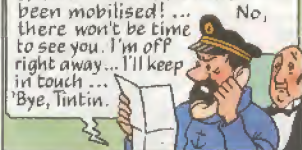
"Crisis deepens - official"  
"On the brink of war?"  
"Are we prepared?" ...  
"Call-up for army re-  
serve" ... "forces on  
standby". Things  
look bright, I must say.



Yes... Tintin  
here... Oh, hello  
Captain... How  
are you? ... Any  
news?



I've just had Admiralty orders:  
"Captain Haddock. Immediate.  
Proceed to assume command  
of merchant vessel blank  
blank" (the name's secret,  
of course) "at blank, where  
you will receive further  
orders." So that's that... I've  
been mobilised! ...  
No, there won't be time  
to see you. I'm off  
right away... I'll keep  
in touch ...  
'Bye, Tintin.

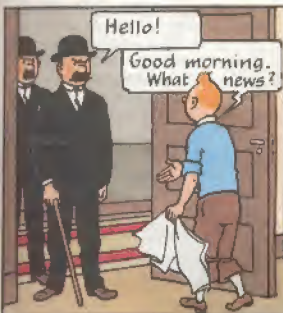


Goodbye, Captain,  
and good luck.  
Let's hope it's  
only a false  
alarm ...



Hello!

Good morning.  
What news?



What news! Plenty! Something  
very odd has just happened!

To be precise ... we just  
happen to be very odd!

Really? Tell me  
about it. Come  
on in...



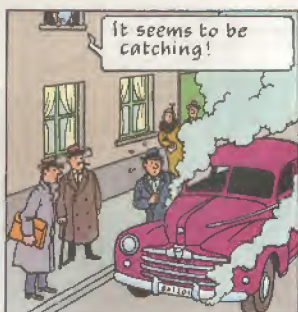
Well, we'd just filled up with  
petrol and were driving  
peacefully along, when all of  
a sudden, without a word of  
warning ... our car went ...



BOOM



It seems to be  
catching!



It certainly is... That's exactly  
what happened to us!

Yes. And that's  
not all ...

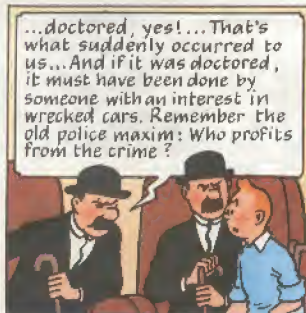


A few minutes later my cigar-  
ette lighter, filled at the same  
pump, blew up in my hands ...

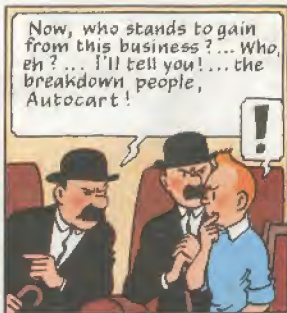
The petrol ... it  
must have  
been ...



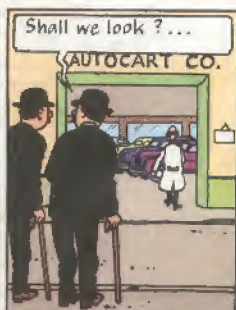
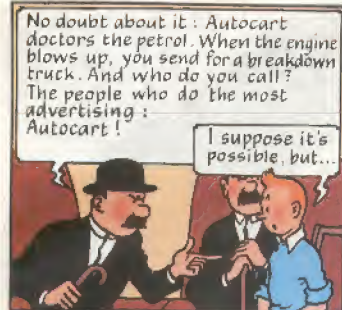
...doctored, yes! ... That's  
what suddenly occurred to  
us... And if it was doctored,  
it must have been done by  
someone with an interest in  
wrecked cars. Remember the  
old police maxim: Who profits  
from the crime?



Now, who stands to gain  
from this business? ... Who,  
eh? ... I'll tell you! ... the  
breakdown people,  
Autocart!







Would you like to comment, sir, on the situation created by the deterioration in petrol quality ...

Catastrophic!  
The situation is catastrophic ...

Look! In two months, consumption has dropped by 65% ... And it's falling every day ... This very morning ...

SALES CHART

... the airline companies decided to suspend all services because of the dangers of fuel explosions in the air ... Oil shares have slumped to half their value ... the bottoms dropping out of the market ... It's a disaster! ... A catastrophe!

Even worse! What about the international situation? ... Supposing war comes ... breaks out tomorrow? ... Imagine what'll happen ... Ships ... planes ... tanks ... The armed forces completely immobilised! ... The mind boggles! ... Disaster!

What do you think has caused this sudden change in the petrol?

That's the question we'd all like to answer! Nothing has changed at the oilfields, or in the refineries, so it has to be sabotage ...

We took samples at the wells, from storage depots, aboard the tankers, in the refineries, and we had them analysed ... Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Then we decided to treat the petrol itself, to prevent it exploding. Our top scientists are working night and day on the problem ... to find some way of ...

BOOM

Another car blowing up! ... Where was I? Oh yes ... My senior research officer says they are on the verge of success in our labs ... I'm expecting a call from him any moment now to say they've found the solution ...

That'll be him ... Do you mind? ...

No, of course ...

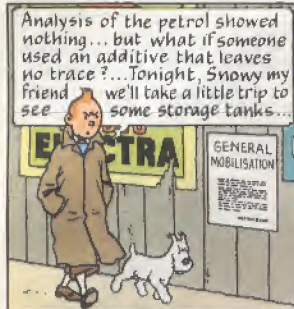
RING RING

Yes? ... Well, you've got it? ... An answer? ... What? ... Nothing at all? ... Nothing? ... I see ... Well, it's a pity ... You'll just have to keep at it ...

What? ... Should you go on with the research? Of course ... surely that's obvious ... Why bother to ask? ...

Because if we're to go on, sir, you'll have to consider building a new laboratory!

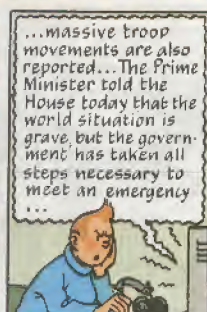
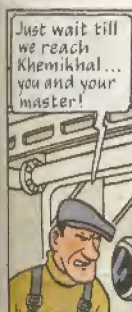
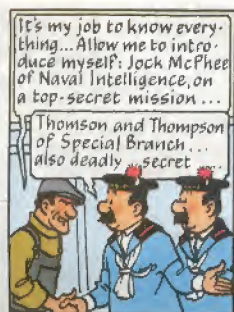




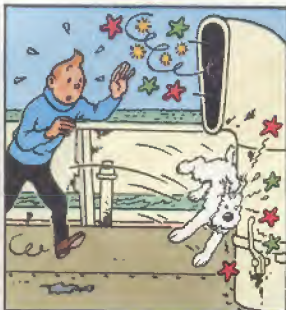


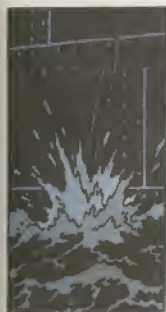




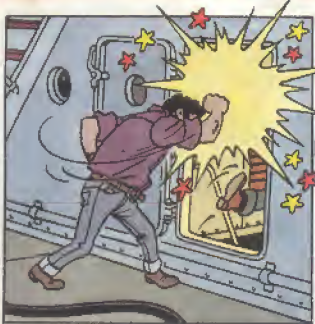
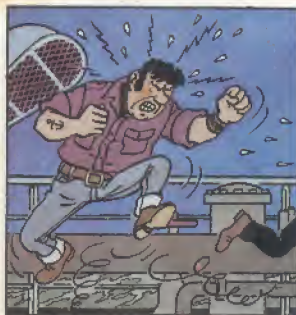
















Next morning...

Ah, the storm's blown it self out...



How do you think he is?

No change... He's wandering...

Good morning... noon and night... light, right, night... left, right, left, right pick 'em up, now!... How now brown cow?



No hope of learning anything useful from that quarter.



Several days later...

There's Khemikhal

Yes, and there's a launch putting out, with police aboard, I bet.



They've tightened up security... Only natural with the international crisis, and the tension in Khemed...



Military police: we have orders to search the ship.

Oh?... Very well...



Military police: this is a cabin search!

Go ahead.



Military police: open your bags!



Aha! As we were told: behind the coat-hooks!



These papers were hidden in the radio officer's cabin, sergeant.

Let me see!

Aha! All very interesting... A shipment of arms to Sheik Bab El Ehr!

I assure you, sergeant, I...

Keep your hands off! ... We're police officers! We'll see you pay for this!

To be precise: you'll see we pay for this!

Heroin in their baggage, sir... And they're pretending to be police officers!

Indeed?

We were tricked, sergeant... An agent from Naval Intelligence gave us the package. He said it contained secret documents.

And where is this 'agent', eh?

He's here on board, sergeant... But he suddenly seems to have lost his wits...

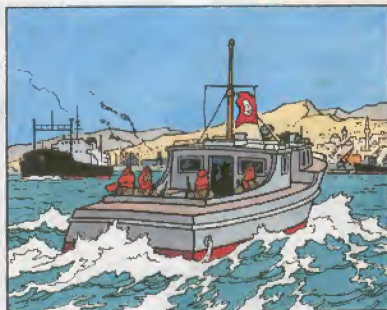
Meaning that we can't question him, I suppose!... A neat little story... But it just happens that I am very far from losing MY wits!

What a fool I've been! ... Another false trail!

All right, get these three bright boys into the launch. They'll be interrogated ashore.

But...

I...



Who've you got there?

The two are just a couple of drug-smugglers, I think... But the young one has important documents to do with Bab El Ehr.

Excellent work! Our noble sheik will reward you when he comes to power! ... Go now!

Bab El Ehr must be informed!





*That evening...*

I have come from Khemikhal, noble master. There I received news: the emir's soldiers have arrested a young foreigner. Well?



One of the guards works for us. He said he'd found papers on the prisoner... papers referring to an important shipment of arms for you.

The young man shall escape and be brought here to me!

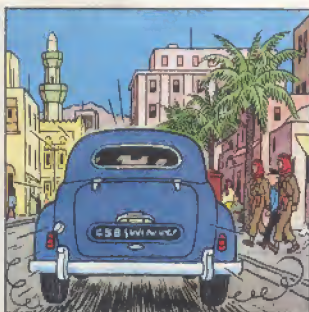


*Next morning...*

Come with me. You're going to the special security gaoi. The secret police want you for questioning.



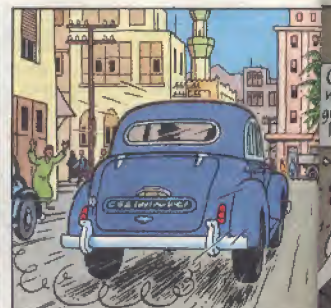
There they are, Mohamed! Put your foot down!



Over here!



Hurry!



Meanwhile ...

We've checked your papers. They're in order. You can go.

Thank you. What about Tintin?

Your friend?... He was seized on his way here by Bab El Ehr's men.

Now we've got to find them... And that's a thankless job. They made the snatch, and vanished without trace. Still, there's a £5000 reward for anyone who leads us to the sheik's hideout.

Five thousand pounds! You needn't say that again!... By this time next week we'll bring you Bab El Ehr trussed like a turkey!

Very good! May Allah go with you!

Next morning...

Five thousand pounds reward!

Here is the young foreigner brought by your partisans, noble sheik.

Enter!

Greetings, and welcome, young stranger... Heaven will bless you for embracing our great cause... Now, when do the guns arrive?

What guns?

What guns? Our guns, our shipment of arms... You've brought news of their delivery: isn't that so?

Me?... Not me, most noble sheik! ...

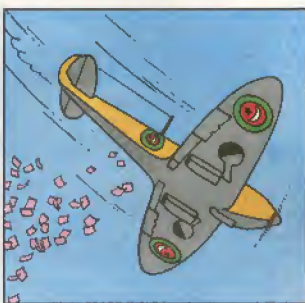
You lied to me, son of a mangy dog!

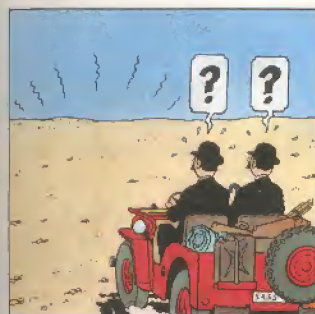
Oh, no! most powerful master... It was the guard who told me... I swear by Allah!

That's quite true, noble sheik. Some papers were found in my cabin... but they didn't belong to me... And I've no idea who put them there...

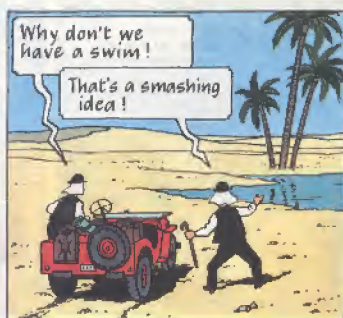
It's a trick... A miserable trick to discover my hideout... I suppose you think I'll let you go?... To run home and betray us to the police, those snivelling lap-dogs of Ben Kalish Ezab? ...Never! You stay here with us. You are my prisoner!











Meanwhile...

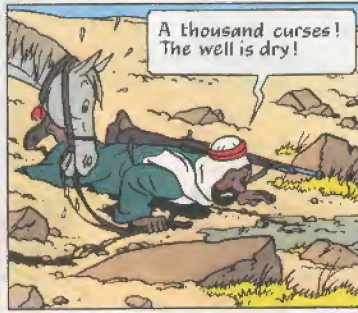
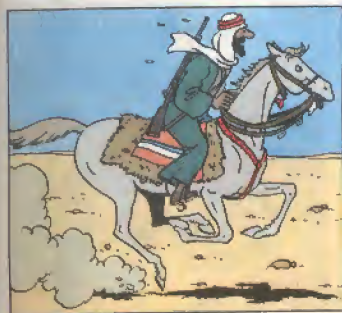


Allah be praised! ...See! The well of Bir Kegg!



Indeed!

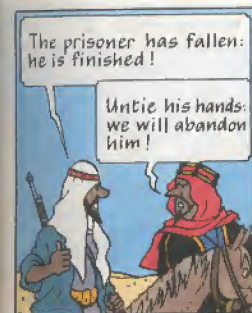
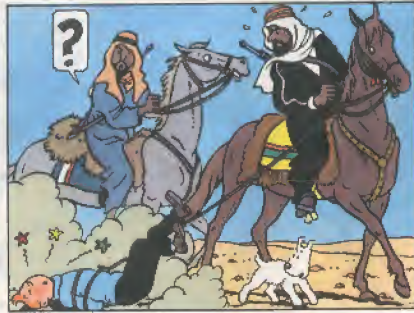
Water! ... At last! ... I'm dying of thirst ...



A thousand curses! The well is dry!



No water! ... We must ride on!



The prisoner has fallen: he is finished!

Untie his hands: we will abandon him!



Wooah! ... Wooah! ... Murderers! Rotten sand-hoppers!



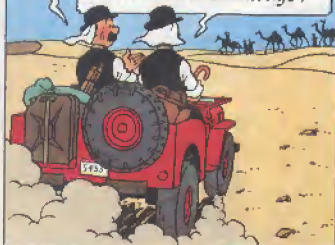
You and your sense of direction! A fat lot of good it's going us!

I tell you we're all right. This is a main road ...



I can prove it ... Look!

Poooh! Another mirage!



There you are! ... I told you so!



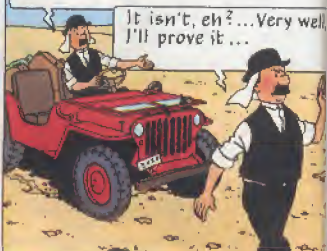
This time there's no mistake : we're saved!

My poor friend ... It's only a mirage ... Any fool can tell at a glance ...



No! No! I promise you it isn't!

It isn't, eh?... Very well, I'll prove it ...



Whoops!



Oh... my goodness... I...er... I beg your pardon... I mistook you for a mirage!



وشف عندك، جيان  
ملعون لكسر رأسك



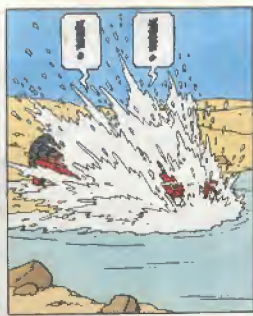
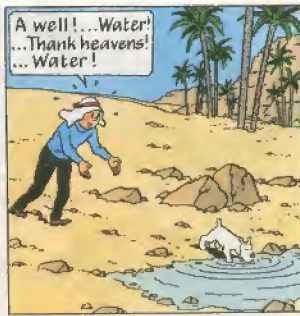
You were absolutely right : it wasn't a mirage ...

No?...

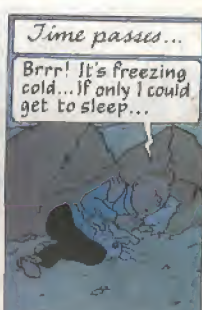
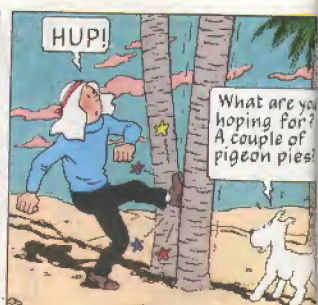
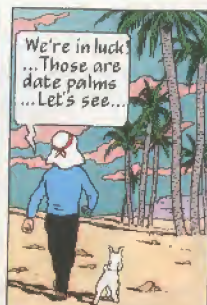


Meanwhile ...















Meanwhile...

Hello... hello...  
pumping station  
twelve reporting  
total loss of pressure  
...pipe must be  
broken above this  
station...Please  
send a repair-gang  
immediately...



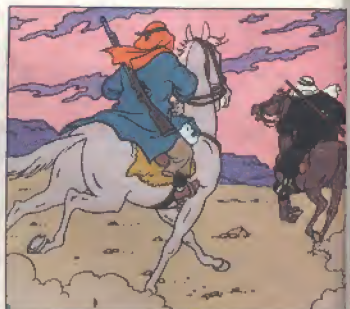
I must be mad...This is crazy  
...But it's too late now. I've  
taken a chance and can't  
turn back...



Hello...Hello...Run-  
ing station eleven  
...Number one con-  
trol here...Close  
all valves immedi-  
ately...The pipes frac-  
tured between you  
and number two  
...A repair-gang  
on the way



This is where we separate...It  
will confuse any pursuers...  
Ahmed will come with me...



Where in the world have I  
heard that voice?

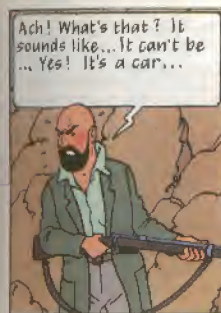
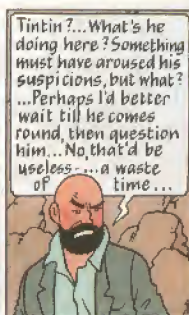
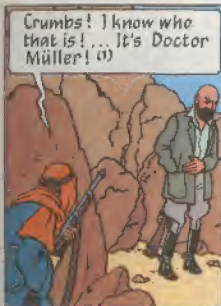


Whoa!

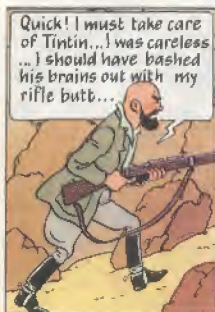


Hold my horse... Wait here  
... I'll be back in a moment









What's it all about?... What's that gangster Müller doing here?... And why should he want to wreck the pipeline?... When he had me at his mercy, why didn't he kill me?... I just don't have any of the answers.



Hello... I can't be mistaken... Let's take a closer look...



They're wheelmarks, Snowy... This really is a bit of luck!



Let's see... I'd say they were tyres on a jeep... The sand and pebbles were thrown back by the wheels, so it was travelling that way. We'll go in the same direction...



And we'll worry about our friend Müller later.



*Meanwhile ...*

I don't like it, Thomson ... If we don't get somewhere soon ...



It's all right!... Look!... There! ... Tracks of a car!

Quite correct! And they aren't a mirage, either!



All we do is follow the tracks and we're saved!



*An hour later ...*

Hooray!... More tracks!... A second car joined the first one...



A real stroke of luck hitting this road.

To be precise: we've really had a stroke!



*Another hour later...*

There!... A third car joined the other two!... We're on a very busy road...

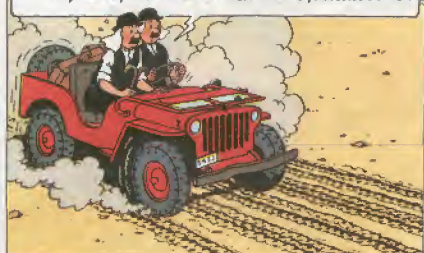


*Several hours go by...*

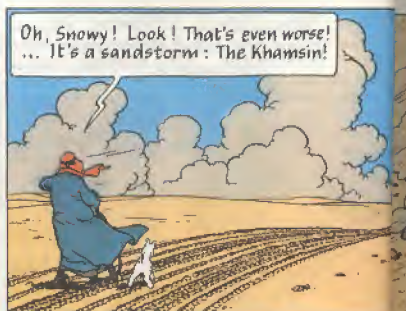
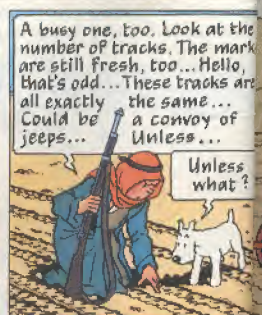
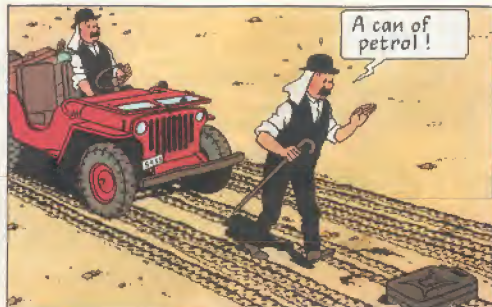
Another one!... That makes the seventh.



We're obviously getting near a big town and ... Hey! Stop!... What's that there, ahead of us?







Ooh! Here it comes! We're right in the middle of it! ... Worst of all, the wind and sand will wipe out all the tracks ...



This awful sand... gets in your eyes... and your mouth... We can't go on! ... Only one thing to do ...



Wait till the storm blows over ...



Ssh! ... I heard something... There it is again... A car engine!



We can't go on like this. We must raise the windscreen and put up the hood ...

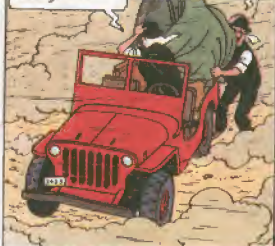


OOEE!



Careful! You mustn't let go ...

Don't worry, I'm holding it.



Ugh! this sand!



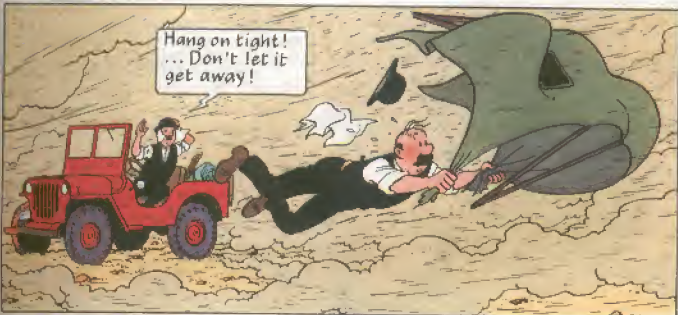
OOEE!



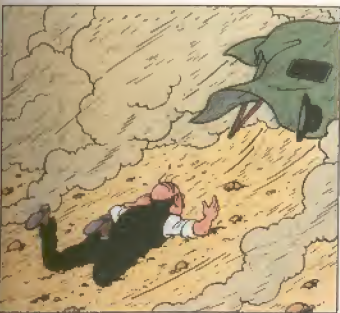
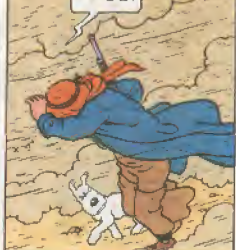
Come on, Snowy!



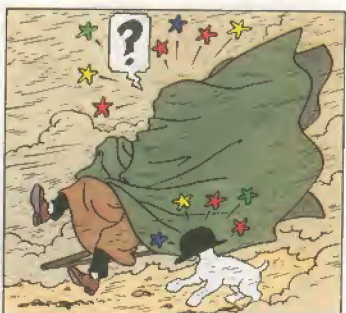
Hang on tight! ... Don't let it get away!



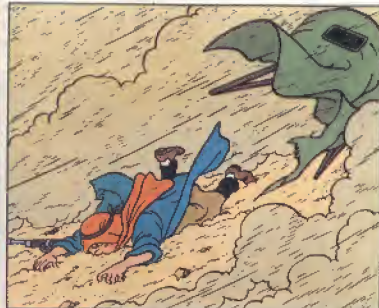
OOEE!



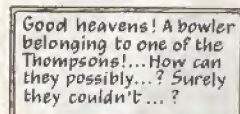
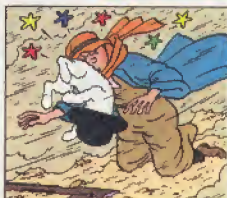
OOEE!







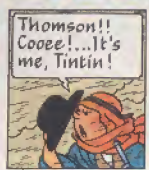
What happened ?



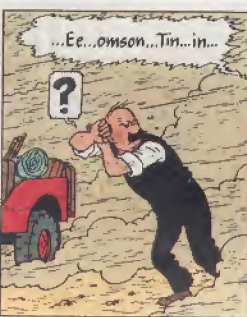
Good heavens! A bomber belonging to one of the Thompsons!...How can they possibly...? Surely they couldn't...?



Thomson!...Coo-ee!...Thompson!

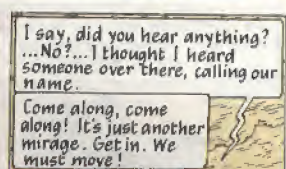


Thomson!! Cooee!...It's me, Timbin!



...Ee...omson...Tin...in...

?



I say, did you hear anything? ...No?...I thought I heard someone over there, calling our name.

Come along, come along! It's just another mirage. Get in. We must move!



They've started the engine...They didn't hear me...



My gun!...A shot! They'll certainly hear that.



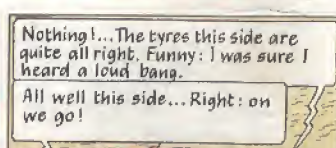
BANG



Hooray! They heard me! They've stopped again.

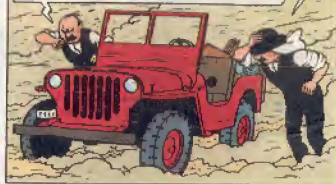


Cooee!...Thomson!

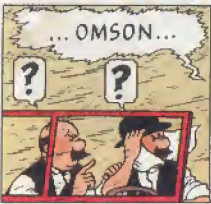


Nothing!...The tyres this side are quite all right. Funny: I was sure I heard a loud bang.

All well this side...Right: on we go!



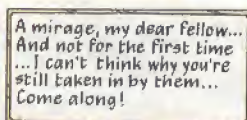
COOEE!... THOMSON!



... OMSON...

?

?



A mirage, my dear fellow... And not for the first time...I can't think why you're still taken in by them... Come along!

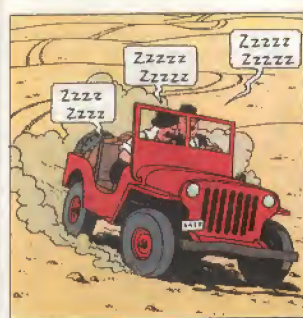
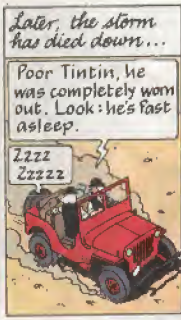
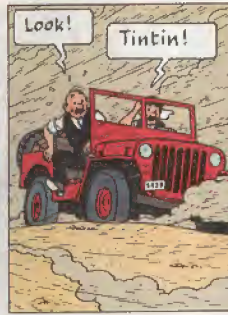
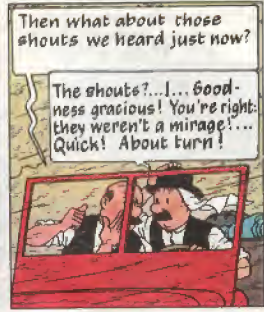


The sound of the engine is fading...Too late...They've gone...

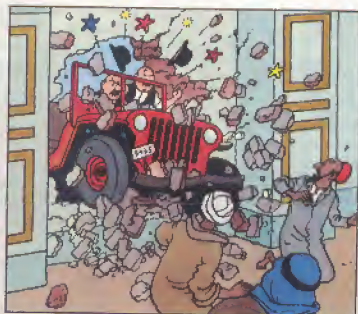


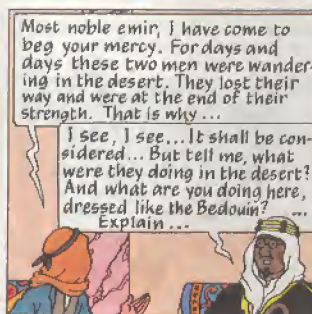
It's all over, Snowy ... We're done for...

Heigh-ho! That's nice!











It's very simple: if I sign a contract with Skoil the attacks will cease immediately. So why do I refuse to sign Professor Smith's contract?

Yes, why, I wonder?

It is strange, I do not know why I am telling you all this... You are a stranger... I have no reason, but I trust you. So... Inch Allah!... I refuse to sign the contract because I do not like Professor Smith and I do not like his Skoil Petroleum.

Oh?

But I have interrupted your story... You were telling how the saboteurs had blown up the pipeline.

They came running back and remounted their horses. I remained hidden behind the rocks... Suddenly...

Master!... Master!... Oh! Master!

What is it?... Who dares to disturb us?

Oh, Master! Master!... Your son!...

Well, Ali Ben Mahmud, what new prank is my little lamb playing this time?

Heaven grant that it is indeed a prank! Master, your son has disappeared!

Ha! ha! ha!... Disappeared!... If you knew my son you would laugh as I do. He's the naughtiest young rascal anyone ever saw!... Every day he thinks up some new little wickedness... But come with me, you'll see for yourself...

He was in the garden, Master...

Yes, yes, Ali Ben Mahmud, calm yourself!

There's the little motor car I gave him last week... on his sixth birthday...

Abdullah!... Abdullah!... Where are you, my treasure?

Abdullah!... Come out now, my little sugar plum!

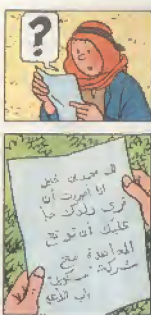
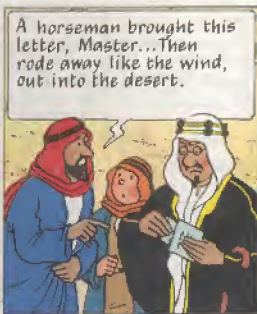
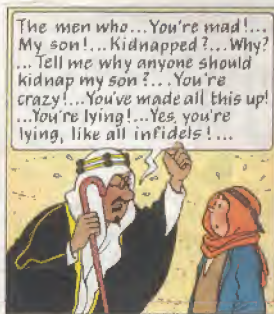
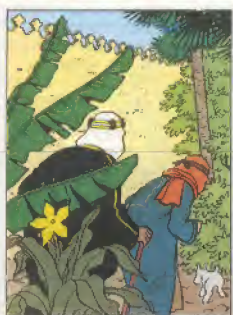
Abdullah, my baby lamb-kin...

Abdullah!... Abdullah! Where are you hiding?

Abdullah, you little rascal, if you don't come at once Papa will be cross!

Excuse me, Highness, but does your son wear a blue robe?

A blue robe?... Abdullah?... No!... Why do you ask?





Bab El Ehr! Bab El Ehr! Son of a mangy dog!... Grandson of a scurvy jackal!... Great grandson of a moulting vulture!... My revenge will be terrible!... I will impale you on a spit!... I will roast you over a slow fire!... I will pull out your beard, one hair at a time... And I will stuff it down your throat...

But we must act!  
Where is my  
military adviser?



Boo-hoo-hoo-ooo-ooo-ooo... My little Abdullah... My little honeybun, where are you?... My little peppermint cream... Boo-hoo-hoo... hoo... hoo...

Highness, you must calm yourself.



Highness, you must calm yourself..

Woo-hoo-hoo... My little angel... Boo-woo-hoo-hoo!

My little Abdullah!  
...Aaaah... Aaaah  
...Aaaah... Aaaah...



TCHOOO! ... Aaaah...TCHOO! ...  
Aaaah TCHOOO!



You see... Aaaaah... TCHOOO!... It was one of his last tricks: he'd just found out about... Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about Aaaaah TCHOOO!... about sneezing pow-ow-ow-der!... He wanted a box for his birthday...

*A few minutes later...*

This is Yussuf Ben Mulfrid, my military adviser. He'll explain his plan of campaign... A cigarette?

No, thank you. I don't smoke.

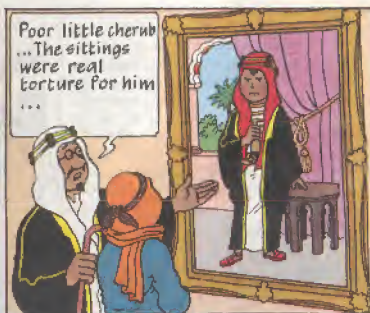
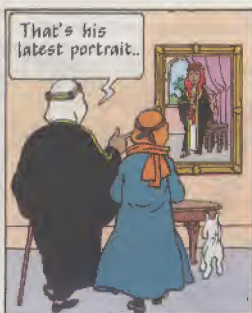
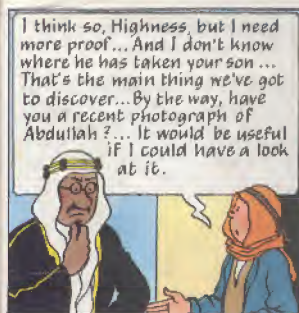
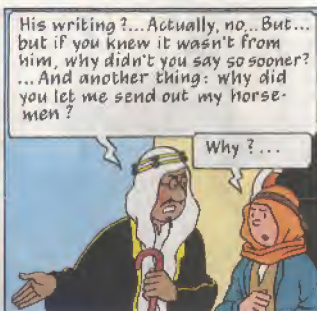
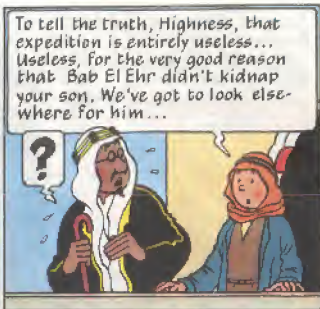
This is Yussuf Ben Mulfrid, my military adviser. He'll explain his plan of campaign... A cigarette?

No, thank you. I don't smoke.

Well, noble master... In two hours, three hundred horsemen will be ready to leave in pursuit of Bab El Ehr's followers. I have already given orders for scouts to follow their trail ... Briefly, I can say to you ...

Allah is good!... My little poppet replaced all my best havanas with his trick cigars... Wasn't that sweet?...

By the beard of the prophet! That wretched little centipede has changed all my best Sobranies for his filthy joke cigarettes! ...





Another of his con-  
founded tricks! ...  
Now where did he  
get that?



Well, he's certainly quite un-  
mistakable! ... Now I must  
start my search, Highness ...  
Could you fit me out with  
some different clothes? ...  
And I'd like some informat-  
ion on Doctor Müll... I mean  
Professor Smith.



Professor Smith?...  
You think he can  
help you find my  
son? ...



He's an archaeologist,  
digging for remains of the  
ancient civilisations that  
once flourished in these  
lands... At the same time  
he acts as representative  
for Skoil Petroleum.



He lives here?

Yes, in Wadesdah, my capital ...  
about twenty miles from here,  
on the coast. He lives in an enor-  
mous pal- ace, perched like an  
eagle's nest on the top of a  
cliff.



I see... There's  
just one  
more thing...



BANG

Take no notice ... Just a cap ...  
Abdullah scattered them every-  
where ... They lived things  
up in the palace...



Oh?...  
I see.

Where was I?... Oh, yes... The two friends  
I mentioned... I have a great favour to  
ask on their behalf: please treat them  
as your honoured guests. Lavish every  
comfort upon them; take every pos-  
sible care of them... But if you want  
me to find your son, for pity's  
sake don't allow them out of  
the palace on any pretext  
what-soever.



Next morning, in Wadesdah...



That must be Professor  
Smith's palace, up there ...



ATCHOO!



A cold?... Or sneezing powder?  
I'd better follow.



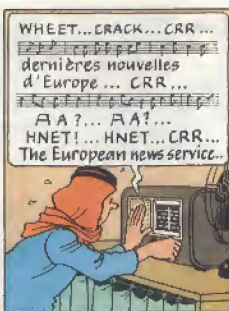
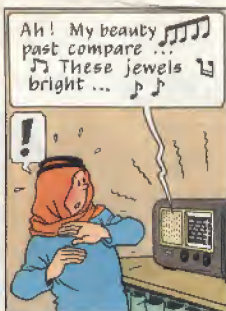
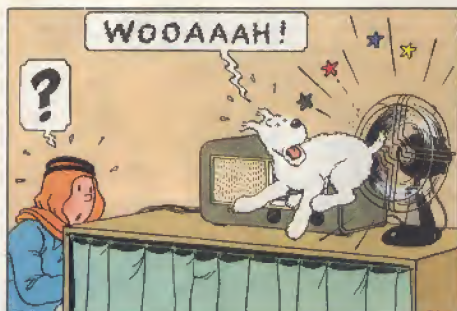
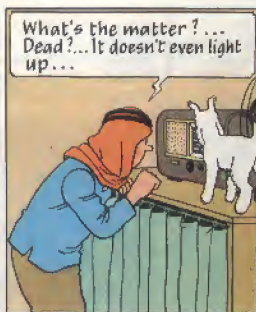
ATCHOO!

صباح  
الخير... تفنيل





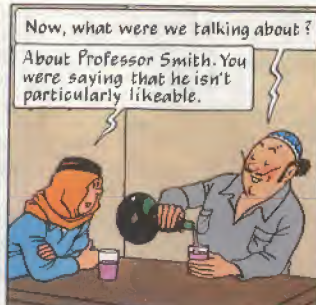






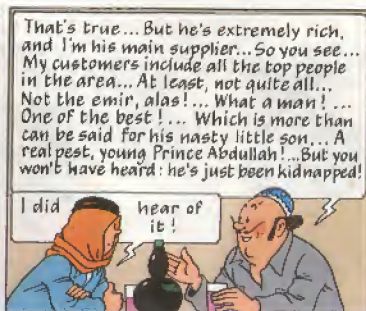
Here we are ... Ah, you're listening to the news ...

Yes, The threat of war seems to be lessening, thank heavens!



Now, what were we talking about?

About Professor Smith. You were saying that he isn't particularly likeable.



That's true ... But he's extremely rich, and I'm his main supplier. ... So you see ... My customers include all the top people in the area ... At least, not quite all ... Not the emir, alas! ... What a man! ... One of the best! ... Which is more than can be said for his nasty little son ... A real pest, young Prince Abdullah! ... But you won't have heard: he's just been kidnapped!

I did hear of it!



Look here, Senhor Oliveira, would you like to be appointed official supplier to the Emir Ben Kalish Ezab?

Would I like it? ... Of course! ... It would be the crowning glory of my career ... But ... what would I have to do?



Help me recover Prince Abdullah ... To do that, smuggle me into Professor Smith's house ...

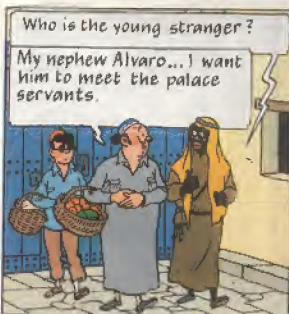
Professor Smith ... What for? ... Well, if you like ... It's quite easy ... I go there each morning ...



The next morning ...

Salaam aleikum, Murad!

Aleikum sala ... Tchoo!!



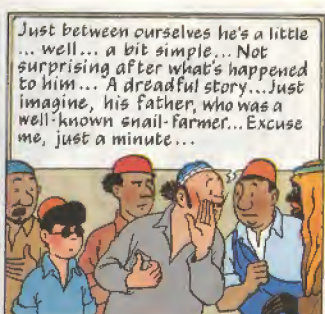
Who is the young stranger?

My nephew Alvaro ... I want him to meet the palace servants.



My friends, let me introduce my nephew Alvaro, just arrived from Portugal ... He's an orphan, poor lad ... I've taken him into my family ...

ATCHOO!

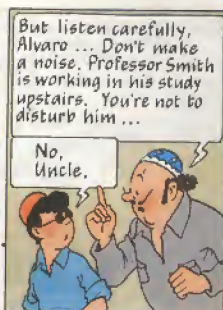


Just between ourselves he's a little ... well ... a bit simple ... Not surprising after what's happened to him ... A dreadful story ... Just imagine, his father, who was a well-known snail-farmer ... Excuse me, just a minute ...



Be a good boy, Alvaro ... While I'm busy with the gentlemen, you run and play in the garden ... I'll call you ...

Yes, Uncle.



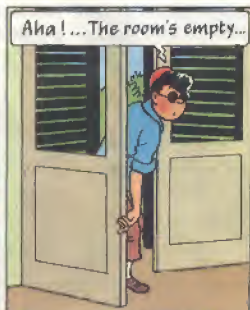
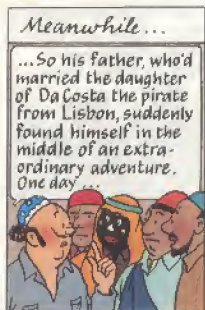
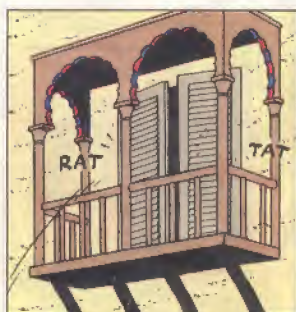
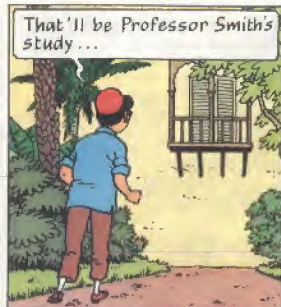
But listen carefully, Alvaro ... Don't make a noise. Professor Smith is working in his study upstairs. You're not to disturb him ...

No, Uncle.



That's fine ... He'll keep them safely occupied with one of his endless stories ... but I mustn't waste time ...





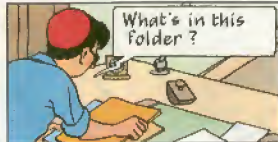
The key's in the door... And the door's locked from the inside!... But there's no-one here... It doesn't make sense...



I'll work that out later... First, let's have a look at the papers on his desk...



What's in this folder?



Hello... A file of newspaper cuttings...



SCIENTI  
BAFFLE MORE  
PETROL BLASTS

by our Motoring Correspondent

WORLD'S AIRCRAFT  
GROUNDED

LONDON, Monday

FUEL MYSTERY

What's gone wrong with our petrol?  
An outbreak of mysterious auto-  
mobile explosions is terrorising  
the world's capitals. Car engines  
are warning...

Now why should Dr. Müller be interested in that petrol mystery? ... I wonder if ...



ATCHOO!

??

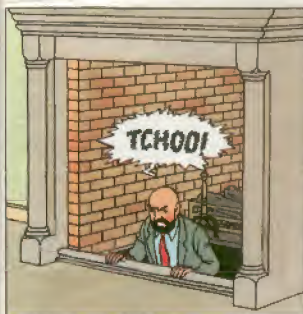


Great snakes! The hearth is opening! ... I must hide!



Aaah...

TCHOO!



What's he doing in that corner?... Ah, I see... That's where a secret button for the trapdoor must be hidden.



Aaah... Aaah... TCHOO!  
... Aaah... TCHOO!  
... Ach, that little pest! ...



Lucky I persuaded him to swap his confounded box of sneezing powder for a pair of roller-skates...



There... I'll burn it in a minute...



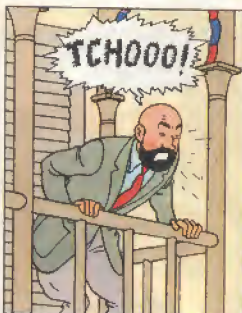
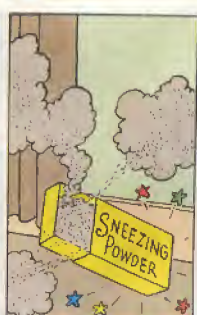
Drat! He's starting to write!

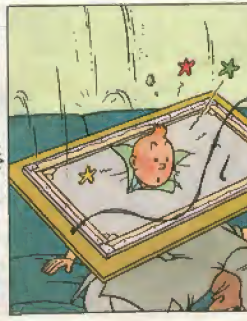
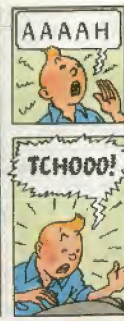
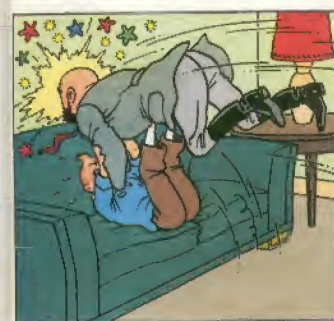
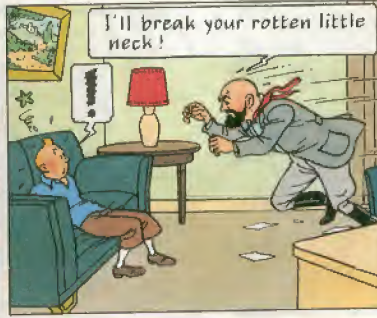
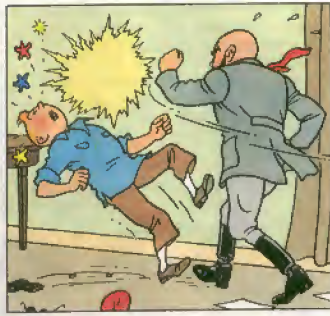


Let's hope he won't be long... I'm beginning to get pins and needles...



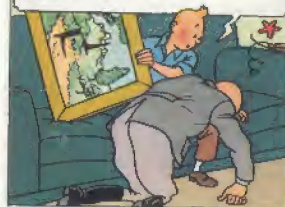








Whew! Saved again! He's still out cold... Quick, I must tie him up, gag him, hide him somewhere... and telephone to the emir...



*Meanwhile, in the kitchen...*

...Alas! The poor woman never got over it. She died of grief and shame, at the age of ninety-seven. Her husband, broken-hearted, soon followed her to the grave. But that wasn't the end of the terrible tragedies this unhappy family had to suffer... One day, their son...



There, Doctor Müller... That's taken care of you!



Hello?... Hello?... Is that the royal palace?... I want to speak to His Highness... Tintin... Hello? Is that you, Highness?



Tintin?... Yes... Where are you?... With Professor Smith?... What?... My son there?... A prisoner?... What's that you say?... What?... Oh! You sneezed! Bless you!



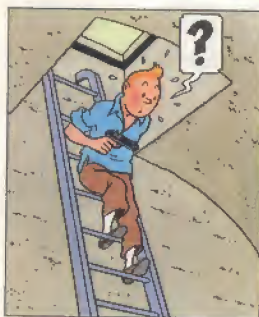
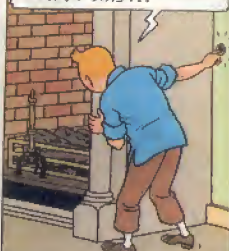
You must send men to Wadesdah... Have the palace surrounded... Meanwhile, I'll try to rescue the prince...



I can't say I like these toys, but this time I'd better be armed.



Now let's have a closer look at this...



Concrete tunnels! An underground fortress...



What's this?



A bunker...



Crumbs! What a place!... A real Maginot Line!



AAAAH...



TCHOO!



Is that you, boss?



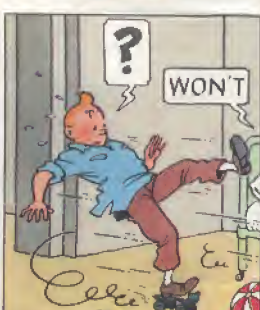
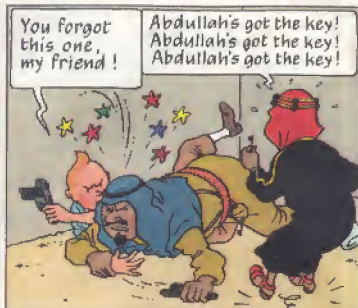
Boss?... Is that you, boss?

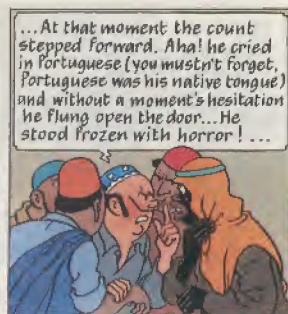
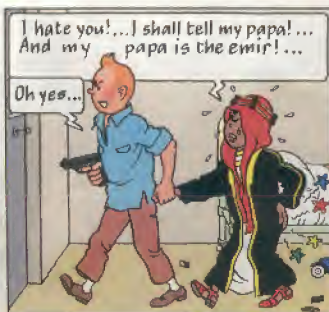
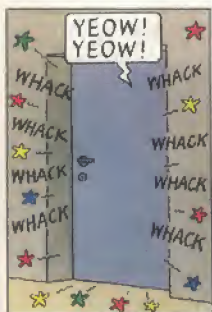


AAAAAH...

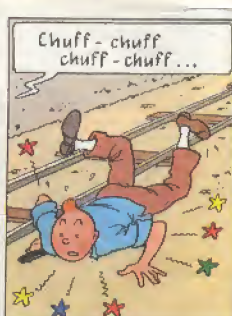
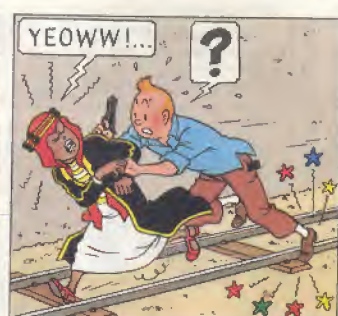






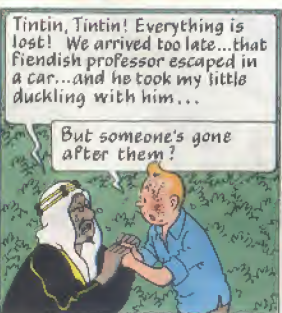
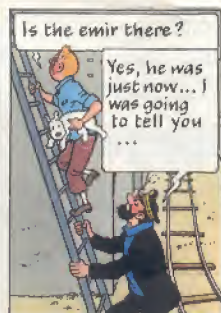


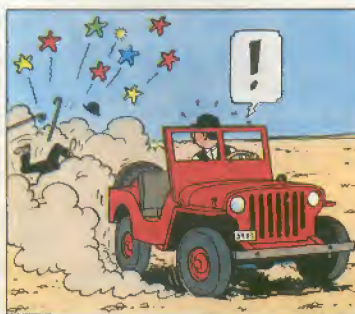
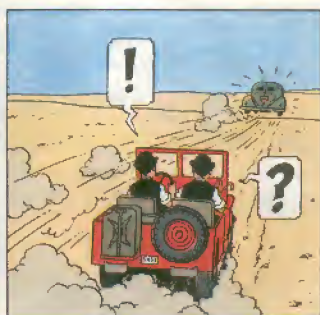
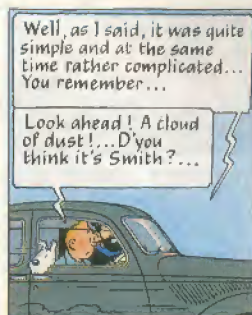
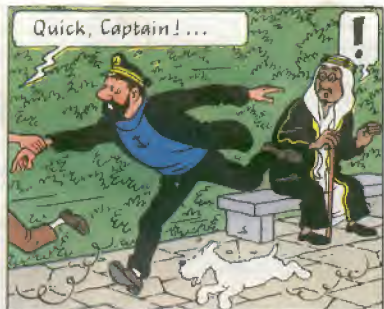










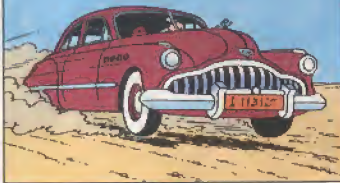




Moving? ... Were we moving? ... Oh, now I see... It must have been that other car... It passed us so fast I thought we were standing still...



Meanwhile ...



I'm thirsty!

So am I ...

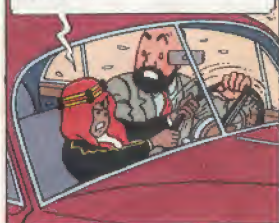


I want an ice-cream!

Later, later...



No! I want one now! I want an icecream! I want an icecream! ... Then I want to go home! ...

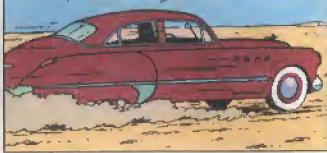


Shut up! There's your icecream!



Waaah! ... Waaah! ... Waaah! ...

And cut out that racket or I'll ... Sit down Abdullah! ... Abdullah! Sit down here!



No! I want to sit here! ... I hate you! ... I shall tell my papa! ... And my papa is the emir! ...



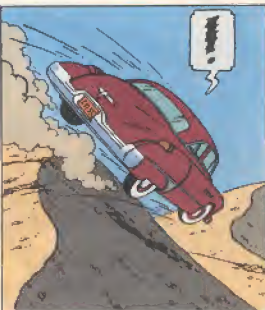
I know... I know...

Yes, you're right... I was just going to tell you... As I said, it was really quite simple... but at the same time rather complicated...

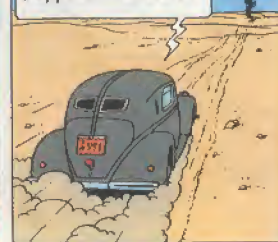
There they are! Another dust-cloud! ... This time it's certainly Müller!

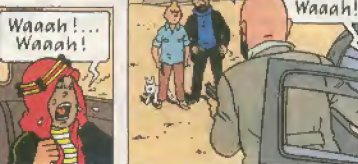
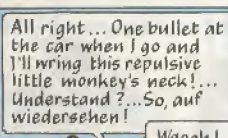
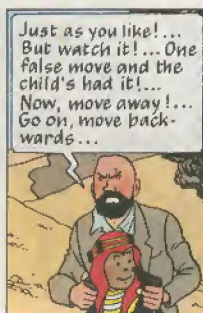
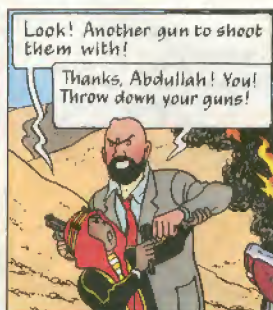


Hee! Hee! My itching powder!

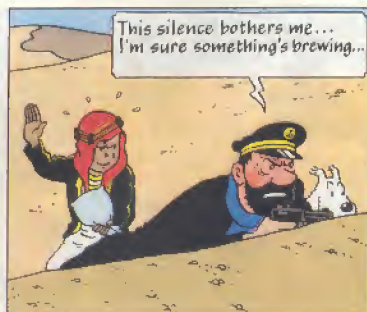
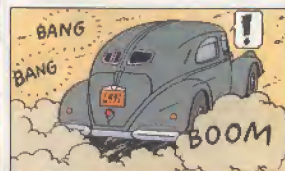


Great snakes! ... Smoke! ... What's happened to them?



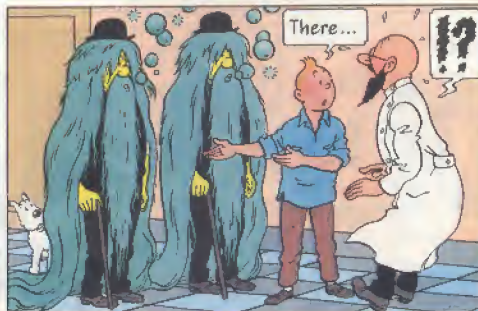
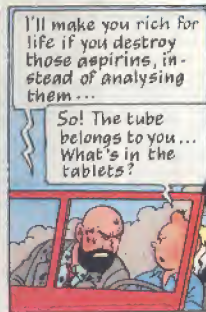
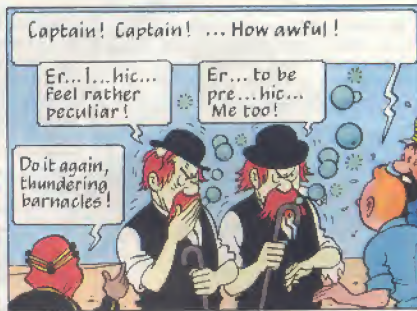
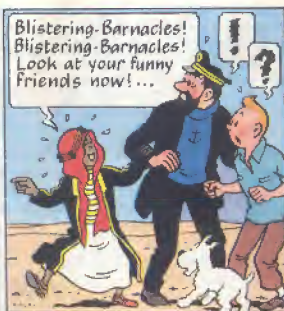


















My house, by thunder! What's that nitwitted ninepin done to my beautiful house?!

Let's read on: he's sure to explain ...



... The research was exceedingly difficult. I enclose a photograph of Marlinspike after my first experiments ...

His first?... Did he do some more?!!



... Anyway, they were successful: that's all that matters. As for the phenomena in the capillary systems of the Thompsons, these will soon cease with the aid of the powders I have prepared and sent to you separately. The other substance I have sent is for use with petrol, and will entirely neutralize the effects of the compound Formula Fourteen...

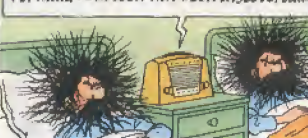


*Some weeks later...*

"Each day of the Müller trial brings startling new disclosures. Today the whole mystery of the exploding car engines was revealed. It is now known that a major foreign power had developed a new chemical, known simply as formula fourteen. This chemical, added to petrol increased its explosive qualities tenfold."



"In the event of war, the agents of this foreign power could easily contaminate the oil reserves of the other side. The recent outbreak of car explosions was by way of a trial, on a reduced scale, of this new tactic. Thanks to the work of the famous boy reporter, Tintin, the secret of Formula Fourteen has been discovered..."



"...An effective antidote has immediately been developed by his distinguished colleague, Professor Cuthbert Calculus, to neutralize the effects of the chemical. By his prompt action, Tintin has undoubtedly prevented the outbreak of war. Better news too of the detectives Thomson and Thompson who inadvertently swallowed some Formula fourteen. They are now out of danger, and well on the way to recovery."



What about that? We had a narrow escape, eh?... If it hadn't been for the Thompsons, we'd be at war!... You know, Captain, you still haven't told us how you came to be mixed up in this business...

Oh, yes... Well, I... thank you, Highness...



Well... Pff... It's like this... Pff... I think I told you... Pff... it's quite simple really... Pff... and at the same time rather complicated...



Would you believe it... Pff... I... Pff...

PSHTT



Another of Abdullah's little tricks! ... And he promised me he'd be good! ... Ah, what adorable little ways he has!



Adorable!... Adorable!... I'll say he is!!...

Well, if you want to hear my story, it won't be from me!... Blistering barnacles, as far as I'm concerned, this is the end!

